

## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 22, 2008. Claims 34 to 42 are in the application, with Claims 1 to 33 having been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and without conceding the correctness of the rejections applied against them, and with Claims 34 to 42 having been newly added. Claims 34, 35, 37, 38, 40 and 41 are the independent claims.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for withdrawal of the requirement to elect. In view of pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, however, Applicants again traverse the suggestion that claim language like “a slot” excludes card readers with multiple slots. In particular, the Office Action appears to contend that “a card slot” cannot include multiple slots because “a card slot” and “a multislot card reader” are both recited in the specification.

Applicants respectfully respond that the proper inquiry is the claim language. In this regard, Applicants reiterate the Federal Circuit “rule” that in claim language, the indefinite article “a” or “an” means “one or more”. See Baldwin Graphic Systems, Inc., v. Siebert, Inc., Slip Op. 2007-1262, pg. 7. Accordingly, Applicants again submit that the Office's position that “a” limits the claimed card slot (or card reader) to a single card slot, or to a single card reader, is unsupportable as a matter of law.

Nevertheless, the issue is believed to have been obviated, since Claims 1 to 33 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and since new Claims 34 to 42 have been substituted therefor. This action has been taken solely in an

effort to expedite prosecution, and without conceding the correctness of any rejection or of any of the points made in the Office Action regarding the requirement to elect.

Turning to the merits of the Office Action, a new title has been selected, and the objection to the specification has been attended to by amendment as set out above. Withdrawal of these objections is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness. Without conceding the correctness of this rejection, the rejection is nonetheless believed to be obviated by the cancellation of Claim 4. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 17 to 24 and 31 to 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter, and in particular for being directed to a program per se. Without conceding the correctness of this rejection, the rejection is believed to be obviated by the cancellation of Claims 17 to 24 and 31 to 33. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,498,658 (Sekikawa). Claims 25, 26, 28, 29, 31 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,426,801 (Reed). Claims 27, 30 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Reed in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,804,023 (Hanaoka). Without conceding the correctness of any of these rejections, the rejections are believed to be obviated by the cancellation of Claims 1 to 33. New Claims 34 to 42 are believed to be allowable over the art of record for at least the following reasons.

#### Claims 34, 37 and 40

The invention of Claims 34, 37 and 40 generally concerns an image processing apparatus including plural card slots in which plural kinds of detachable cards are respectively inserted. Data is read out from memory cards inserted in the card slots, and an accessible card slot is set as a slot which can be accessed to read data.

According to one aspect of the invention, in an initializing state after a power supply is turned on, the card slot in which a memory card is first inserted is set as the accessible card slot, the card slots other than the accessible card slot are set as inaccessible, and the setting of the accessible card slot is not changed until the power supply is turned off.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to reduce unexpected data damage caused by from a user mistakenly writing data to a wrong memory card, or malfunctions caused by trying to read data from the wrong memory card.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 34 is directed to an image processing apparatus which includes a connection unit connected to an external processing apparatus, and which further includes plural card slots in which plural kinds of detachable memory cards are respectively inserted. The apparatus also includes a reading unit constructed to read out data from memory cards inserted in the card slots, and an access control unit constructed to set a card slot as an accessible card slot which the reading unit can access. In an initializing state after a power supply is turned on, the access control unit sets a card slot in which a memory card is first inserted as the accessible card slot, sets the card slots other than the accessible card slot as inaccessible, and does not change the setting of the accessible card slot until the power supply is turned off.

Independent Claims 37 and 40 are directed to a method and a storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 34.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of setting a card slot in which a memory card is first inserted as an accessible card slot in an initializing state after a power supply is turned on, and setting the card slots other than the accessible card slot as inaccessible, wherein the setting of the accessible card slot is not changed until the power supply is turned off.

As understood by Applicants, Sekikawa is directed to reading images and storing the image data thereof in a memory. Icons are displayed and can be selected to read out the corresponding image data from the memory card. See Sekikawa, Abstract.

However, Sekikawa discloses allowing simultaneous access to plural memory card slots, specifically input and output card slots. See, e.g., Sekikawa, FIG. 19. Therefore, Sekikawa is not seen to disclose or suggest exclusive access to a single card slot, much less setting a card slot in which a memory card is first inserted as an accessible card slot in an initializing state after a power supply is turned on, and setting the card slots other than the accessible card slot as inaccessible, wherein the setting of the accessible card slot is not changed until the power supply is turned off.

Reed is not seen to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Sekikawa. In particular, Reed is also seen to allow simultaneous access of detected memory cards. See, e.g., Reed, Column 8, lines 1 to 10 and 62 to 65 and Column 9, lines 1 to 10.

Hanaoka has also been reviewed and is not seen to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Sekikawa and Reed.

Therefore, independent Claims 34, 37 and 40 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 35, 38 and 41

The invention of Claims 35, 38 and 41 generally concerns a recording apparatus including plural connection units respectively corresponding to plural kinds of detachable external memory cards. Detection signals are output when it is detected that the plural kinds of external memory cards have been respectively inserted in the plural connection units.

According to one aspect of the invention, power is supplied to only one connection unit in which a external memory card is first inserted from among the plural connection units, in response to respective detection signals after a state in which the external memory card is not inserted in any of the plural connection units, and the power is supplied for the external memory card which is first inserted in the one connection unit.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to reduce unexpected data damage caused by from a user mistakenly writing data to a wrong memory card, or malfunctions caused trying to read data from the wrong memory card.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 35 is directed to a recording apparatus. The apparatus includes a card reader comprising plural card slots comprising plural connection units respectively corresponding to plural kinds of detachable external memory cards which are respectively inserted in the plural connection units, and a detection unit adapted to detect that the plural kinds of external memory cards have been respectively inserted in the plural connection units and to output detection signals. In addition, the apparatus includes a power supply switching circuit constructed to supply

power to only one connection unit in which a external memory card is first inserted from among the plural connection units, in response to the respective detection signals after a state in which the external memory card is not inserted in any of the plural connection units, wherein the power is supplied for the external memory card which is first inserted in the one connection unit. The apparatus also includes a data reading unit adapted to read data of the external memory card from the card reader, and a recording unit adapted to record the data read by the data reading unit.

Independent Claims 38 and 41 are directed to a method and a storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 35.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 35, 38 and 41, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of supplying power to only one connection unit in which a external memory card is first inserted from among the plural connection units, in response to respective detection signals after a state in which the external memory card is not inserted in any of the plural connection units, wherein the power is supplied for the external memory card which is first inserted in the one connection unit.

In particular, as discussed above, the art of record is not seen to disclose exclusive control of a single memory card slot, and in fact discloses simultaneous access to multiple card slots.

Therefore, the applied art is also not seen to disclose or suggest supplying power to only one connection unit in which a external memory card is first inserted from among the plural connection units, in response to respective detection signals after a state in which the external memory card is not inserted in any of the plural connection units,

wherein the power is supplied for the external memory card which is first inserted in the one connection unit.

Accordingly, independent Claims 35, 38 and 41 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Turning to a formal matter, an Information Disclosure Statement, with fee, accompanies this paper. Consideration of the cited art is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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